



City of Santa Barbara California

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: November 3, 2005
AGENDA DATE: November 10, 2005
PROJECT ADDRESS: 522 E. Sola Street (MST2005-00063)

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
Jan Hubbell, AICP, Senior Planner
Chelsey Swanson, Assistant Planner

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of a proposal to convert an existing single-family residence and a new unit currently under construction to two condominium units. The lot is currently developed with a three-bedroom 1,444 square foot residence (Unit 1), which includes a permitted addition and attached two-car garage currently under construction. Newly proposed is the expansion of the addition to Unit 1 by 131 square feet. The second unit (Unit 2) is a two-story two-bedroom 1,560 square foot unit that is also currently under construction. Parking for this unit would be provided within a newly proposed one-car garage and one uncovered space. A Modification was previously approved to allow a portion of Unit 2's second story to encroach into the required open yard area.

II. REQUIRED APPLICATIONS

The discretionary applications required for this project are:

1. A Tentative Subdivision Map for a one-lot subdivision to create two (2) residential condominium units (SBMC Chapters 27.07 and 27.13); and
2. A Condominium Conversion Permit to convert two (2) existing residential units to two (2) condominium units (SBMC Chapter 28.88).

III. RECOMMENDATION

The proposed project conforms to the City's Zoning and Building Ordinances and policies of the General Plan. In addition, the size and massing of the project are consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the project, making the findings outlined in Section VIII of this report, and subject to the conditions of approval in Exhibit A.



522 E. Sola Street Vicinity Map

APPLICATION DEEMED COMPLETE: September 27, 2005
DATE ACTION REQUIRED PER MAP ACT: December 16, 2005

IV. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS

SITE INFORMATION

Applicant: Jeff Shelton, Architect	Property Owner: Steve Gowler
Parcel Number: 029-091-006	Lot Area: 8,750 sq. ft.
General Plan: Residential, 12 units/ acre	Zoning: R-2
Existing Use: Two-Family Residential (2 nd unit under construction)	Topography: 7% slope to the southeast (rear of lot)
Adjacent Land Uses: North - Two-Family Residential East - Two-Family Residential South - Two-Family Residential West - Two-Family Residential	

PROJECT STATISTICS

Unit 1	Existing	Proposed	Total
Living Area	1,444 sq. ft. (includes permitted addition)	131 sq. ft.	1,575 sq. ft.
Garage	463 sq. ft. (permitted/ under construction)	0 sq. ft.	463 sq. ft.
Unit 2			
Living Area	1,560 (permitted, under construction)	0 sq. ft.	1,560 sq. ft.
Garage	n/a	273 sq. ft.	273 sq. ft.

V. ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

Standard	Requirement/ Allowance	Existing	Proposed
Setbacks -Front -Interior	-15' single-story, 20' two-story portion -6'	-15' and 70' for two-story portion (Unit 1 only) -6' or greater for both units	No change proposed.
Building Height	30'	Unit 1 - 23' (16' at street level) Unit 2 - 21'3"	No change proposed.
Parking	2 covered, 2 uncovered	2 covered (under construction)	1 covered, 1 uncovered; 4 spaces total
Lot Area Required for Each Unit	3,500 sq. ft. per unit	4,375 sq. ft. per unit	No change proposed.
Open Yard	1,250 sq. ft.	1,220 sq. ft.	1,312 sq. ft. w/ Mod

Private Outdoor Living Space	Unit 1 – 96 sq. ft. (2 nd floor) Unit 2 – 140 sq. ft. (ground floor)	N/A	Unit 1 – 282 sq. ft. (2 nd floor) Unit 2 – 434 sq. ft. (ground floor)
Lot Coverage			
-Building	N/A	2,882 sq. ft 33%	3,158 sq. ft 36%
-Paving/Driveway	N/A	1,873 sq. ft 21%	2,028 sq. ft 24%
-Landscaping	N/A	3,995 sq. ft. 46%	3,564 sq. ft. 40%

The proposed project would meet the requirements of the R-2 Two-Family Residence Zone related to setbacks, building height, solar access, density, parking, and private outdoor living space (condominium conversion requirement). The open yard area requirement is met with a previously approved Modification that allowed a second story element on Unit 2 to encroach into the open yard area. Changes to the project have occurred since the Modification was granted that result in more open yard area where all minimum dimensions are met with the exception of the second story element that encroaches into the open yard. Therefore, the open yard is becoming larger than what was previously approved.

VI. BACKGROUND

The applicant originally submitted the proposal as a rental project. On that basis, the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) granted final approval for the development of the second unit and the addition to existing house, including the attached two-car garage and trellis for two uncovered parking spaces on April 26, 2004. As discussed above, on October 6, 2004, a Modification to allow a second story element to be located within the designated open yard area was approved. Building permits for the project were issued on February 4, 2005.

The application for the proposed condominium project was submitted to the Pre-Application Review Team on March 2, 2005. The Planning Commission applications were submitted for Development Application Review Team (DART) review on July 26, 2005, and found complete for processing on September 27, 2005.

Newly proposed changes that have been made to the project since the building permits were issued includes adding a one-car garage attached to the two-car garage instead of the previously approved trellis structure, adding one uncovered parking space, and expanding the second story addition to Unit 1 by 131 square feet. The second story deck attached to Unit 1 is also proposed to expand out over the one-car garage.

VII. ISSUES

A. DESIGN REVIEW

The Architectural Board of Review (ABR) reviewed the proposed project as rental units on three separate occasions (conceptual, preliminary, and final reviews). On November 11, 2003, the ABR asked that the applicant study the parking in front of the newly proposed unit to provide a more

pedestrian-friendly entrance experience and continued the project to the consent calendar for preliminary approval. The project received final approval on July 26, 2004.

This project was reviewed again by the ABR on September 6, 2005, to recognize the conversion of the units to condominiums and to review the proposed one-car garage and uncovered parking space (meeting minutes are attached as Exhibit D). The ABR requested a landscape plan and asked that the applicant study reducing the amount of hardscape and increasing the amount of landscape at the uncovered parking space. The project received overall positive comments and was continued indefinitely to the Planning Commission. The expansion of the front unit by 131 square feet was not yet proposed at the time of the ABR meeting. Staff determined that this change does not alter the architectural design and would not require a subsequent conceptual ABR review, although Preliminary and Final ABR approval will be required.

B. COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

Land Use Element: The Land Use Element of the General Plan describes the project site as being located in the Laguna neighborhood of the City. The Laguna neighborhood is developed as a residential area in its eastern and northern portions with single-family dwellings, duplexes, and higher-density multiple units interspersed throughout the neighborhood. The area where the proposed project is located is a small portion of the neighborhood zoned R-2, where the General Plan calls for duplex development. Most other residential areas in the neighborhood are in the R-3 Zone. The General Plan recognizes that, because it is within walking distance to the downtown and other employment areas, the conversion of single-family residences into duplex and multiple dwellings is appropriate. To enable such development, the General Plan calls for 12 dwelling units per acre throughout the entire neighborhood. In this case, the development results in 10 dwelling units per acre.

Housing Element: Santa Barbara has very little vacant or available land for new infill residential development and, therefore, the City has supported build-out of housing units in the City's urban areas where individual projects are deemed appropriate and compatible. The proposed development would provide for homeowner opportunities in a neighborhood with close proximity to the employment and commercial opportunities.

A goal of the Housing Element is to assist in the production of new housing opportunities, through the public and private sector, which vary sufficiently in type and affordability to meet the needs of all economic and social groups. The proposed project contains two units that are very similar in size and are generally consistent with scale of single-family homes and detached units in the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed condominium units would not be restricted to low- or moderate-income households. The City provisions for inclusionary zoning only apply to projects that involve ten or more units.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Archaeological Resources: The City's Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) showed that the project site is located within the American Period (1870-1900), and the Early 20th Century (1900-1920) zones. Therefore, when the project was initially submitted as proposed development of the second unit and an addition to the front unit, the applicant was required to

provide a Letter Report Confirming No Archaeological Resources for the areas of proposed ground disturbance. The report, dated April 8, 2004 and prepared by Stone Archaeological Consulting, concluded that the proposed project and ground disturbances would not have a potential impact on cultural resources and that no additional investigations are necessary.

Conclusion: Staff has determined that the project is exempt from further environmental review pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15315 for minor land divisions (Tentative Subdivision Map) and Section 15303 for the construction of small structures (one-car garage and addition) and the conversion of both units into two residential condominiums.

VIII. FINDINGS

The Planning Commission finds the following:

A. THE TENTATIVE MAP (SBMC §27.07.100)

The Tentative Subdivision Map is consistent with the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Santa Barbara. The site is physically suitable for the proposed condominium conversion and additions, the project is consistent with the density provisions of the Municipal Code and the General Plan, and the proposed use is consistent with the vision for this neighborhood of the General Plan. The design of the project will not cause substantial environmental damage, and associated improvements will not cause serious public health problems.

B. NEW CONDOMINIUM DEVELOPMENT (SBMC §27.13.080)

1. There is compliance with all provisions of the City's Condominium Ordinance.
The project complies with density, parking, storage, laundry facilities, separate utility metering, adequate unit size and outdoor living space requirements.
2. The proposed development is consistent with the General Plan of the City of Santa Barbara.
The project is consistent with applicable policies of the City's General Plan, including the Housing Element, Conservation Element, Noise Element and Land Use Element.
3. The proposed development is consistent with the principles of sound community planning and will not have an adverse impact upon the neighborhood's aesthetics, parks, streets, traffic, parking and other community facilities and resources.
The project is an infill residential project proposed in a primarily residential area where residential is a permitted use. The project is adequately served by a public street, will provide adequate parking to meet the demands of the project and will not result in measurable traffic impacts. Adequate park facilities exist nearby, and the project would not adversely impact other community resources, such as water, sewer, police, fire, schools and parks. Environmental review of the project

determined that no significant environmental effects would result from the project. The design has been reviewed by the City's Architectural Board of Review, which found the architecture, density, and landscaping appropriate.

C. CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION (SBMC§28.88.120)

1. All provisions of the Condominium Conversion Ordinance are met and the project will not be detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of the community.
2. The proposed conversion is consistent with the General Plan of the City of Santa Barbara and with the density requirement of its Land Use Element.
3. The proposed conversion will conform to the Santa Barbara Municipal Code in effect at the time the application was deemed complete, except as otherwise provided in the Condominium Conversion Ordinance.
4. The overall design (including project amenities) and physical condition of the conversion will result in a project, which is aesthetically attractive, safe, and of quality construction.
5. The units have not been "affordable rental units" therefore; affordability restrictions do not apply to the project.
6. The project is exempt from the provisions of Section 28.88.130 because the project consists of fewer than four units.
7. The Applicant has declared that the existing residence is owner-occupied and therefore, no tenants occupy the units.

Exhibits:

- A. Conditions of Approval
- B. Site Plan
- C. Applicant's letter, dated August 31, 2005
- D. ABR Minutes